

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

S E C R E T STATE 053774

NODIS

JERUSALEM FOR ATHERTON USDEL

FOLLOWING REPEAT AMMAN 2002 ACTION SECSTATE MARCH 1.

QUOTE S E C R E T AMMAN 2002

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, US, IS, JO, XF

SUBJECT: PERCEPTIONS OF THE BEGIN VISIT

REF: STATE 051239

1. IN JORDAN, AS REFLECTED IN PAST REPORTING, THERE
IS GROWING DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE LEADERSHIP AND THE
PUBLIC THAT THE U.S. HAS NOT SEEN FIT TO EXERT ITS

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ASSUMED CONSIDERABLE LEVERAGE ON BEGIN AND THE ISRAELIS
TO PRODUCE A MORE FORTHCOMING, IN THE JORDANIAN VIEW,
RESPONSE TO THE ADAT INITIATIVES. THIS HAS BEEN
SOMEWHAT OFFSET BY THE U.S. STATEMENTS ON SETTLEMENTS,
OUR SUBMISSION OF THE ISRAELI AND ARAB AIRCRAFT "PACKAGE
DEAL" AND GROWING ATTENTION HERE TO PUBLIC OPINION
POLLS IN THE U.S. WHICH SHOW SOME U.S. SHIFT IN

OPINION AWAY FROM BEGIN AND ISRAEL AND TOWARD SADAT.
THE BEGIN VISIT HAS NOT YET BEGUN TO RECEIVE SERIOUS
ATTENTION IN THE PRESS OR TO BE THOUGHT ABOUT
SERIOUSLY BY THE LEADERSHIP (MOST INFLUENTIAL
OF WHICH HAVE BEEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR THE
LAST 8-10 DAYS).

2. HOWEVER, CAIRO PRESS AND SADAT ARE MUCH LISTENED
TO IN AMMAN WHERE THEY WILL AWAKE RESPONSIVE CORD
PARTICULARLY WITH KING HUSSEIN WITH THEMES SADAT
HAS BEEN DEVELOPING FOR US PRIVATELY. INDEED, HUSSEIN
WILL WANT TO SEE IT AS A WATERSHED BECAUSE HE CLEARLY
BELIEVES THAT WE ARE THE KEY TO POSSIBLE FLEXIBILITY
ON THE PART OF THE ISRAELIS AND THAT A MEETING OF
BEGIN WITH THE PRESIDENT IS THE PERFECT PLACE FOR
US TO PLAY THAT KEY ROLE. THUS EXPECTATIONS WILL
BE HIGH. INCONCLUSIVE OR NEGATIVE RESULTS FROM THE
LOCAL PERSPECTIVE WILL BE A DISAPPOINTMENT, EVEN
AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF EXISTING DISAPPOINTMENT
OVER THE FACT THAT UP TO NOW THE U.S. HAS NOT BEEN
SEEN IN THE ARAB MIND AS EITHER READY OR ABLE TO
SAVE (OR SALVAGE) THE SADAT INITIATIVES BY WORKING
MORE ON THE ISRAELIS.

3. WE CAN OFFSET TO SOME EXTENT EXAGGERATIONS ON
THE PART OF THE LEADERSHIP HERE OF THEIR EXPECTATIONS
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BY SOME EARLY PLAIN TALK ABOUT WHAT IS POSSIBLE.
HOWEVER, TO THE EXTENT WE DO SO, WE RISK FURTHER
UNDERMINING CONFIDENCE IN OUR ROLE IF WE DO NOT
PROVIDE THE KING WITH A CLEARER IDEA OF SOME OF
OUR LONGER TERM STRATEGY AND PLANNING TO BRING
ABOUT A PEACE SETTLEMENT. INDEED, ONE OF THE
PRINCIPAL FACTORS IN HIS COMING INTO NEGOTIATIONS
WILL BE HIS CONTINUING AND GROWING CONFIDENCE
THAT WE MEAN BUSINESS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS, THAT
WE HAVE A STRATEGY, THAT WE INTEND TO PRODUCE
MOVEMENT NOT JUST MOMENTUM, AND I BELIEVE
STRONGLY WE SHOULD KEEP THIS CLEARLY IN MIND
AS WE MOVE AHEAD.

4. RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT PASS CAIRO, JERUSALEM
(FOR ATHERTON), DAMASCUS, JIDDA AND TEL AVIV.
PICKERING UNQUOTE VANCE

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